

## NEWS

### **The 11<sup>th</sup> Ljudevit Jurak International Symposium on Comparative Pathology** Zagreb, June 9-10, 2000

The 11<sup>th</sup> Ljudevit Jurak International Symposium on Comparative Pathology, held in Zagreb, Croatia, June 9-10, 2000, under the auspices of the European Society of Pathology and Academy of Medical Sciences of Croatia, was organized by the Department of Pathology, Sestre milosrdnice University Hospital, Zagreb, Croatia (President, Professor M. Belicza); Institute of Pathology, Leopold Franzens University of Innsbruck, Innsbruck, Austria (Vice-president: Professor G. Mikuz); and Department of General Pathology, School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Zagreb, Zagreb, Croatia (Vice-president: Professor Ž. Grabarević). The Symposium was a good opportunity for experience exchange, and comparison of ideas and results of investigations between human and veterinary medicine.

After the opening ceremony, the Ljudevit Jurak Award ceremony for contribution to the advancement of comparative pathology took place. The awards were presented by Professor Mladen Štulhofer, president of the Croatian Academy of Medical Sciences, to Professors H.G. Fassbender, Mainz, Germany, and D. Ferluga, Ljubljana, Slovenia.

The main topic of the Symposium was Comparative Pathology of Tumors in 2000. Memorial lectures were presented by M. Bračko, Ljubljana, Slovenia, and R. Steinbeck, Kiel, Germany. Other invited speakers were F. Silvestri, Trieste, Italy; K. Gall-Trošelj, Zagreb, Croatia; Z. Čulig, Innsbruck, Austria; F. del Piero, Padua, Italy; M. Reinacher, Giessen, Germany; H.G. Fassbender, Mainz, Germany; and W.L. Ragland, Georgia, USA. Free papers were presented as oral presentations or posters. The authors from Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Slovenia and Croatia presented recent data on the diagnosis, protocols, and pathohistologic and immunohistochemical findings in different human and animal tumors. Posters on different subjects including human and veterinary medicine were presented mostly by younger authors from Italy, Brasil, Iceland, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia.

In the Herman Jurak Round Table on Rheumatologic Diseases, an interesting invited lecture on the value of animal models for the pathogenetic evaluation of rheumatoid arthritis was presented by Professor W.G. Fassbender from Germany.

During the Symposium, two slide seminars were held. The slide seminar on Cytopathology of Pleural and Peritoneal Effusions was organized by Dr. A. Pogačnik, Ljubljana, Slovenia,

and Drs. B. Petrović and H. Čupić from Zagreb, Croatia. The other slide seminar on Comparative Pathology of Human and Animal Tumors was organized by Professor G. Mikuz from Innsbruck, Austria. The cases were presented by Professors S. Dirnhofer, Innsbruck, Austria; M. Reinacher, Giessen, Germany; F. Gartner and F. Schmitt, Porto, Portugal; and B. Krušlin, Zagreb, Croatia.

At the end of the Symposium, a poster discussion and poster presentation award session were held. The Poster Presentation Award was presented to S.H. Bambir, S. Helgason, F. Marino and B. Macri from Iceland and Italy.

The next Symposium will be held on June 1-2, 2001, with gastrointestinal pathology as the main topic.

*Božo Krušlin*

### **Healthy Life Style and Prevention of Stroke Postgraduate Course**

Dubrovnik, June 5-10, 2000

This year's Healthy Life Style and Prevention of Stroke Postgraduate Course, organized by the Inter-University Center Dubrovnik, Academy of Medical Sciences of Croatia, and Croatian Stroke Society was held in Dubrovnik, Croatia, June 5-10. Directors of this international postgraduate course are Professor Vida Demarin, University of Zagreb; Professor Roman Haberl, University of Munich; Professor Kurt Niederkorn, University of Graz; and Assist. Professor Tanja Rundek, Columbia University, New York. Since the first Course in 1990, it has been traditionally held every year at the beginning of June.

More than thirty participants from all over Croatia (Zagreb, Osijek, Karlovac, Koprivnica, Zadar, Virovitica, Slavonski Brod, Vinkovci, Dubrovnik, Labin and Kaštel) as well as from the United States, Germany, Czech Republic, Latvia, Poland, Slovenia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina attended the Course. The Course was opened by one of its directors, Professor Vida Demarin, who briefly described the history of the Course from the beginning in 1990 to the present. The Course began as gathering of a group of enthusiasts, having since grown into a respected meeting of distinguished experts dealing with stroke. Stroke risk factors, and new insights in the epidemiology, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of stroke are presented at the Course. The main characteristic of the Course is that it enables exchange of knowledge between renowned experts and young colleagues as well as comparison of data on stroke from various

countries. Professor Demarin emphasized that the Course could not be organized in Dubrovnik during the war, but the organizers worked very hard to maintain its continuity. During the war in Croatia, the Course was held in Zagreb and on the Brinjuni Islands, whereas last year it took place in Medulin due to the war in Kosovo. Now, the Course had returned to its original venue, the beautiful town of Dubrovnik, hoping for it to be held there in the years to come as well.

This introduction was followed by the working part of the Course. It began with Professor Demarin's lecture on the present state and perspectives in the field of stroke. Assist. Professor Z. Trkanjec presented the program of stroke prevention in Croatia, developed by the Croatian Stroke Society. Dr. Angela Schreiber from Munich, Germany, delivered a lecture on the possibilities of stroke prevention in regard to stroke risk factors.

On the second day of the Course, the participants took active part in the work of the Congress of the Croatian Society for Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology, held at the same time in Hotel Excelsior. The Course participants held a section on Ultrasound in Neurology (chairpersons: Professor Vida Demarin and Assist. Professor Zlatko Trkanjec). Upon successful presentations made at the Congress, the Healthy Life Style and Prevention of Stroke Postgraduate Course was continued on Tuesday afternoon with a lecture by Professor Pavel Kalvach from Prague, Czech Republic, on local and distant metabolic changes during ischemic failure. Professor Miljenko Kalousek and Dr. Josip Hat, Zagreb, Croatia, presented an educative lecture on computed tomography in the diagnosis of cerebrovascular disorders. Assist. Professor Andrei Alexandrov, Houston, USA, delivered a lecture on the usage of transcranial Doppler (TCD) in acute stroke. The second day of the Course was closed with a lecture on impaired cerebral autoregulation in diabetic patients, presented by Assist. Professor Bojana Žvan, Ljubljana, Slovenia.

The third working day of the Course began with a lecture held by Professor Vida Demarin on color and power Doppler findings in extracranial arterial disease and on the role of ophthalmic artery in atherosclerotic carotid arterial disease. Dr. Marijana Bosnar-Puretić presented sonographic features of cranio-cervical arterial dissection. Assist. Professor Andrei Alexandrov held a very interesting lecture on TCD monitoring during thrombolysis in acute stroke patients, pointing out the observation that TCD monitoring seemed to improve the outcome of thrombolysis and that ultrasound beams somehow ameliorated its success. Dr. Johannes Schenkel, Munich, Germany, presented a lecture on the diagnosis of intracranial arterial stenosis by use of transcranial color-coded sonography. At the end of the third day of the Course, Dr. Kristina Jaracz, Poznan, Poland, delivered a lecture on the knowledge about stroke among non-stroke patients.

The program of the Course was continued on Friday, June 9, with a lecture on secondary stroke prevention, held by Assist. Professor Zlatko Trkanjec, which was followed by a lecture on 5-year follow-up study on the ischemic stroke outcome in the Osijek area, presented by Dr. Dragutin Kadojić, Osijek, Croatia. Dr. Piotr Kowal, Poznan, Poland, held a lecture on age

and hemorrheologic changes in stroke. Dr. Aija Freimane, Valmeire, Latvia, presented an analysis of stroke survivors and disability indices for planning of rehabilitation services. Dr. Marija Vitas, Karlovac, Croatia, presented data on stroke mortality collected during the last two years at the Department of Neurology, Karlovac General Hospital, with due consideration of the situation in the Karlovac area as a whole. Dr. Davor Jančuljak, Osijek, Croatia, showed data on the occurrence of hyperglycemia in patients with ischemic stroke. Dr. Nikola Barić, Labin, Croatia, presented his results on the effect of breath holding on spectral Doppler display of the internal carotid bifurcation. Dr. Ksenija Marčec, Koprivnica, Croatia, illustrated her results on the effect of benzodiazepines on evoked potential response and their clinical use in vertigo syndrome. At the end of the working part of the Course, Dr. Anamarija Mrđen, Zadar, Croatia, presented results on TCD evaluation of the effect of cilazapril, an ACE inhibitor, on cerebral hemodynamics in hypertensive patients.

After closing remarks given by Course director, Professor Vida Demarin, certificates of attendance were distributed and this year's Healthy Life Style and Prevention of Stroke Postgraduate Course was finished. All lectures and presentations will be published in the journal *Acta clinica Croatica*.

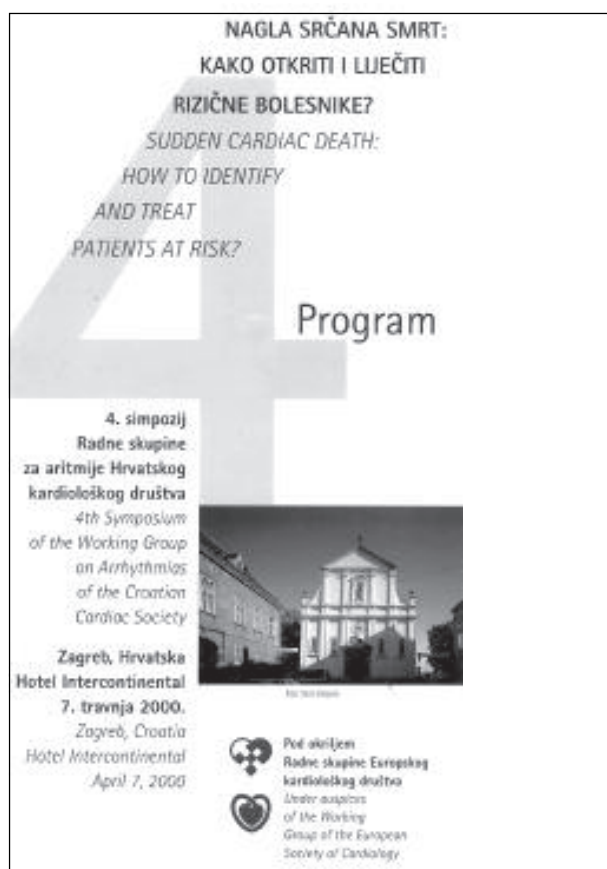
On Friday, June 9, the Inter-University Center Dubrovnik organized a party for the participants of all courses held during the week. At the party, Mrs. Berta Dragičević, secretary of the Inter-University Center Dubrovnik, expressed her gratitude to the participants of the courses held at the Center. She also expressed her hope for the courses organized by the Center would be held in Dubrovnik in the forthcoming years, because in the past years many courses had to be organized elsewhere due to the war.

Apart from the working part of the Course, a welcome cocktail and gala dinners in famous Dubrovnik restaurants were offered to the Course participants. Also, a one-day trip to the island of Lopud was organized, where the participants gathered in an informal atmosphere. The picturesque and beautiful town of Dubrovnik and its surroundings overwhelmed the participants, especially those visiting Dubrovnik for the first time. They all announced they would come to attend the next year's Healthy Life Style and Prevention of Stroke Postgraduate Course in Dubrovnik.

*Zlatko Trkanjec*

#### **Sudden Cardiac Death: How to Identify and Treat Patients at Risk? 4<sup>th</sup> Symposium of the Working Group on Arrhythmias of the Croatian Cardiac Society Zagreb, April 7, 2000**

The 4<sup>th</sup> Symposium of the Working Group on Arrhythmias of the Croatian Cardiac Society was held in Hotel Inter-Continental in Zagreb, on April 4, 2000, under the auspices of the



Working Group on Arrhythmias of the European Society of Cardiology.

This year's Symposium was dedicated to sudden cardiac death with special reference to diagnostic and therapeutic modalities. There are several reasons why this issue was chosen. Despite significant advances in the management of patients with life-threatening arrhythmias, sudden cardiac death accounts for some 50% of total cardiac deaths. During the last ten years, a large number of clinical researches have been performed in this field of cardiology that required evaluation and consensus for daily clinical practice. Finally, Croatia has not yet established a registry of sudden cardiac death, patients at risk are treated mainly conservatively, and implantation rate of cardioverter-defibrillators is very low.

Prominent European and Croatian cardiologists were invited to the Symposium to answer these questions. Structurally, the Symposium was divided into four sessions, including the most interesting aspects of sudden cardiac death.

In the session on Epidemiology and Mechanisms, the main topic were the mechanisms of sudden cardiac death and

profiles of patients at risk. Among presentations, mention should be made of the lecture on sudden cardiac death in competitive athletes, presented by Professor F. Furlanetto, a renowned Italian cardiologist from Trento. Other speakers in this session were Dr. M. Jakić (Osijek), Professor P. Rakovec (Ljubljana), Dr. A. Jović (Zadar), and Dr. Z. Batinić (Krapinske Toplice). The session on Identification of Patients at Risk was very important, because all methods for risk stratification of sudden cardiac death were presented critically, with due mutual consideration and in relation to different heart diseases. In this session, papers were presented by Professor K. Birtić (Zagreb), Dr. D. Puljević (Zagreb), Professor L. Zaputović (Rijeka), Dr. K. Stanić (Rijeka), and Professor A. Šmalcelj (Zagreb). In the session on Prevention of Sudden Cardiac Death, the main topic was primary prevention of sudden cardiac death, dealing with prophylactic measures aimed at reducing sudden death rates in cardiac patients by then free from any history of life-threatening arrhythmic events. Professor Ž. Reiner (Zagreb), Professor C. Torp-Pedersen (Copenhagen), Dr. B. Radić (Zagreb), Professor P. Touboul (Lyon), and Professor H. Klein (Magdeburg) presented the latest data and current state of the art on the use and efficacy of statins, ACE inhibitors, antiarrhythmic drugs, and cardioverter-defibrillators in patients identified to be at risk. The last session on Treatment of Patients at Risk was dedicated to therapy for high-risk patients in special clinical conditions such as heart failure (Professor V. Goldner, Zagreb), hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (Assist. Professor D. Petrač, Zagreb), survived cardiac arrest (Dr. R. Cappato, Milan), and coronary revascularization (Professor K. Steinbach, Vienna). A number of very important conclusions were derived from this session. The presence of heart failure significantly increases the incidence of sudden cardiac death. The risk of sudden death in hypertrophic cardiomyopathy is low, and therapy is still directed to patients who have experienced life-threatening ventricular arrhythmias. Implantable cardioverter-defibrillators are superior to antiarrhythmic drugs in prolonging survival in patients with survived cardiac arrest or unstable ventricular tachycardia. At this time, there are no data on the effects of anti-ischemic interventions (PTCA, CABG) as preventive measures for sudden cardiac death. Results from a small group of patients show that the prognosis of patients in whom anti-ischemic intervention is possible is equal to the prognosis in patients treated with an implantable cardioverter-defibrillator.

Summaries of all invited lectures have been printed in the Book of Abstracts. More than 300 participants from different areas of Croatia as well as from Slovenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina attended the Symposium. The Symposium was evaluated according to the Croatian Medical Chamber regulations, and all participants received a certificate of attendance.

*Dubravko Petrač*